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## **MEETING DOCUMENT**

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<b>From:</b>	European Commission
<b>To:</b>	Working Party on defence industry (DIWP)
<b>Subject:</b>	Commission Presentation: "European Defence Innovation Scheme – Support to Europe's Defence Tech Founders"

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Delegations will find enclosed the Commission presentation on the "European Defence Innovation Scheme – Support to Europe's Defence Tech Founders" for the DIWP meeting on 13 January 2026.

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# European Defence Innovation Scheme – Support to Europe’s Defence Tech Founders



**EUDIS**

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[eudis.europa.eu](https://eudis.europa.eu)

# The European Defence Fund

Shaping the future of European defence from ideas to impact

## European Defence Fund (EDF)

€ 7.3 billion\*

EU programme for defence research & development :

- R&D grants
- Supports innovation & industrial competitiveness
- Fosters cross-border collaboration in the EU

## EU Defence Innovation Scheme (EUDIS)

€ 1.5 billion\*

Proposed in 2022. Tailored for new defence players and SMEs:

- Accelerate defence innovation
- Broaden the defence innovation base
- De-risk high potential ideas

## Governance & funding



- Managed by the Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space (DG DEFIS), European Commission.
- **Funding priorities:** EU Member States' defence capability and technology priorities.
- **Funding:** Annual Work Programme for R&D calls and support actions.



EUDIS

# EU Defence Innovation Scheme (EUDIS)

Supporting defence innovation across the EU



## EDF R&D GRANTS AND BUSINESS COACHING

- SME calls, Technological Challenge, Spin-in calls, Disruptive tech call
- Financial support to third parties (cascade funding) optional for every call
- SME Business Coaching



## DEFENCE HACKATHONS/MAKEATHONS

- Held across Europe multiple times a year
- Funding for local hosts
- Mentoring programme for winning teams
- Open to UA participants



## BUSINESS ACCELERATOR

- Programme for start-ups and scale-ups
- Two calls annually to select 20 companies per cohort
- € 120 00 voucher



## DEFENCE EQUITY FACILITY

- €175 million, implemented by EIF
- For private funds to invest in defence and dual-use companies



€ 1.5 billion



## MATCHMAKING EVENTS

- Onsite and online events for innovators and investors
- Continuously open call
- Open to UA entities



## DEFENCE TECH FORGES & TESTING & VALIDATION (2026)

- Under BraveTech EU initiative to support rapid development and testing
- Vouchers for iterative technology development



### Non-thematic/open calls for SMEs

- Supports SMEs developing innovative defence solutions
- Consortium:  $\Delta \Delta \Delta$
- For: SMEs only (+RTO for research projects)
- Research (TRL 4) and development actions
- STEP technologies
- Funding:
  - 5-6 M€
  - 20% -> 100% costs

### Disruptive Tech calls

- Supports cutting-edge, high-risk/high-impact research projects
- Consortium:  $\Delta \Delta$
- For: SMEs, mid-caps, large companies, RTOs.
- Mixed action non-thematic (3 M € pp)
- Development: New abilities in the over-the-horizon sensing (29 M €)
- Funding:
  - 20-100% costs

### Technological challenge

- Provides common testing environment to several R&D teams
- Consortium:  $\Delta \Delta \Delta$
- For: SMEs, mid-caps, large companies, RTOs
- Research actions
  - AI-based tactical situational awareness using swarms of small robots and drones
- Funding:
  - Several consortiums
  - 100% costs
  - Organisation: 7 M €
  - Participation: 4,6 M € pP

### Spin-in calls from civil to defence

- Helps spinning-in civil R&D to defence
- Consortium:  $\Delta \Delta \Delta$
- For: SMEs, mid-caps, large companies, RTOs.
- Research actions
  - New turbofan engine (20 M € pp)
  - Layered critical seabed infrastructure protection (15 M € pp)
- Funding:
  - 100% costs



## Coaching Service for SMEs

- Helps addressing business challenges to support companies' growth
- Participant: Δ
- Any SME participating in an EDF project
- Support: up to 15 days of expert coaching over 6 months

Always available in first year of participation to project

## Defence Hackathons

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- Supports emerging teams addressing defence challenges
- Team: Δ
- For: individuals, SMEs
- Min. 2/year, in several locations across EU
- Open to UA
- Funding & support for 2 hackathons. Wining team receives:
  - Mentoring program
  - Monetary prize

Call for local organizers: 11 Dec 2025 - 25 Jan 2026

Next Defence Hackathon  
DEFENDING AIRSPACE: 26 -28 March 2026

## Business Accelerator

- Supports business development strategy
- Participant: Δ
- For: Start-ups, scale-ups
- 2 cohorts/a year
- 20 companies per cohort
- Funding & support:
  - Training & coaching
  - € 120 000 voucher
  - Demo-Day

Next call: 16 Dec 2025 - 25 Jan 2026

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## Matchmaking service

- Connects companies with potential investors
- Participant : Δ
- For: SMEs, small mid-caps, corporates, investors, end-users
- Open to UA

## Support :

- On-site & online matchmaking & capacity building events
- Matchmaking platform
- Individual matchmaking plan

Continuous call for application

## Defence Equity Facility

- Provides finance to private funds investing in defence technologies
- Participant : Δ
- For: venture capital, private equity, private debt funds
- €175 million funding available (2024-2027)

## Support :

- Investments by the **European Investment Fund (EIF)** as Limited Partner
- On average 25% of total fund size
- No minimum / maximum € per fund

Continuous call for application

## Private Funds Supported

KEEN

Project (A)

DMNES

Sienna  
INVESTMENT MANAGERS

day1

...more to be announced in 2026...

# What to expect in 2026...

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## EIC Accelerator:

- Direct equity, grants, blended finance for dual-use technologies
- Step Scale-Up Scheme: equity financing for SMEs/small mid-caps with focus on defence

European Defence Fund's SME (R) & Disruptive Tech calls: more simplified evaluation process

Defence Industry Transformation Roadmap: to fully unleash the potential of disruptive innovation

- Supporting the full investment journey of defence companies (€1 billion defence fund-of-funds)
- Boosting time-to-market of defence products (new funding instrument AGILE)
- More efficient defence procurement regulation (revision of Defence Procurement Directive)
- Generating defence skills and talent (Defence Talent Platform)

# Key dates to know for EDF and EUDIS

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## EDF calls for defence R&D proposals

- EDF Work Programme 2026 is published
- 10-11 March 2026 – EDF Info Day, incl EUDIS Session and Investor Day in Brussels and online

## EUDIS Defence Hackathons

- 11 December 2025 – 25 January 2026 – **First call to select 8 local hosts** to organize the Defence Hackathon
- 26 – 28 March 2026 – EUDIS Defence Hackathon
- **Late Spring 2026 – Second call to select 8 local hosts** to organize the Defence Hackathon
- October 2026 – EUDIS Defence Hackathon

## EUDIS Defence Business Accelerator

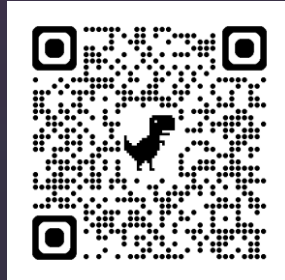
- 16 December 2025 – 25 January 2026 – **first call for start-ups and scale-ups** (20 company cohort)
- **May – June 2026 – second call for start-ups and scale-ups** (20 company cohort)

## EUDIS Matchmaking

- Open call to join the EUDIS Matchmaking platform for start-ups, scale-ups and investors!
- A programme for 2026 – to be announced in January 2026.

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## Visit our websites



[eudis.europa.eu](https://eudis.europa.eu)

[defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu](https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu)

## Get in touch with us



Contact EUDIS Team





















EUDIS

# Funded Capabilities and Technologies

European Defence Fund work programme categories

-  Medical response, CBRN & human factors
-  Information superiority
-  Sensors
-  Cyber
-  Space
-  Digital transformation
-  Energy resilience & environmental transition
-  Materials and components

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-  Air combat
  -  Air and missile defence
  -  Ground combat
  -  Force protection and mobility
  -  Naval combat
  -  Underwater warfare
  -  Simulation and training

+ Two Horizontal Call Categories dedicated to SMEs and Disruptive Technologies

